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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION ON ISRAEL-HEZBOLLAH COMBAT

Editorial Commentary

-- "Without comprehensive peace, the war will not end"

Chief Editor Taher Odwan writes on the back-page of independent, mass-appeal Arabic daily Al-Arab Al-Yawm (08/02): "During the long struggle, the Arabs never went to military and political battle against Israel with the intent of resolving the situation. Their wars were short, days or weeks, after which they would run to Washington and Moscow for a new decision to be issued by the Security Council that will become a pretext for stopping the fighting. The international community, particularly the United States and Europe, were comfortable with this wishy-washy fatigued Arab stand, because it did not want conclusive solutions that will be at Israel's expense and that will lead to U.N. decisions giving back occupied lands to the Palestinians and the Arabs, and because the international community was in complicity with Israel's strategy of marking time, leaving the cause without a solution on the pretext that time is sufficient to provide new Arab concessions.... The game of marking time, however, had a negative effect that Israel did not expect. Israel lost forever the Arab people's trust in relation to its claims about seeking peace and coexistence with the Arabs under just peace. Israel totally lost the battle, indeed the conflict, because it has pulled in the Arab people onto the battle field and resistance became a popular demand. Because Israel lost the peace after losing the wars, America came in with all its military and political weight to fight wars on its behalf against the Arab people.... The America of George Bush today wants to resolve the situation in Lebanon under the slogan of the new Middle East by eliminating the resistance in Lebanon, but rather it is pushing the Lebanese people against the wall. What Washington wants is another Iraq in Lebanon that will reinvent the failed project of the Greater Middle East.... George Bush wants conclusive solution in the region. Fine. The road to implementing Resolution 1559 starts with the implementations of Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338. Without this the war in Lebanon will be just another war in the list of never-ending wars between the people on one hand and the America-Israel camp on the other."

-- "The Israeli-American factory of lies"

Center-left, influential Arabic daily Ad-Dustour (08/02) editorial reads: "It is as if nothing has happened in Qana. The entire world has let down the Lebanese people and the martyrs of Qana, while the Israeli war machine continues its brutal aggression. All denunciations and feelings of sorrow and shock were lost in the corridors of the United Nations, the Security Council, the foreign

ministries and the TV satellite stations. The Lebanese people benefited nothing from the sorrow and regret, and the world left Israel and the United States to continue the production of lies that aim at continuing the war and destroying more of Lebanon.... The Israeli aggression continues and there is no hope of a ceasefire in the short term. It is clear that the Israeli objective is to occupy Lebanese territory between 10-30 kilometers, depending on the Israeli army's capacity to infiltrate and Hezbollah's ability to defend, before the U.S. political ability to provide Israel with its required time is ended. The problem is that there is no room for optimism in achieving any progress at the Security Council. The only hope that remains ... lies in Hezbollah's ability to stop and cut back in size the Israeli aggression and to strengthen the will of the resistance."

-- "Pre-modern era Middle East"

Columnist Mohammad Abu Rumman writes on the op-ed page of independent, centrist Arabic daily Al-Ghad (08/02): "This region and its Arab people mainly were destined to be the 'focal point' for the fumbling U.S. foreign policy. Nearly six years of Bush Junior's rule, debate is still most severe in Washington about the foreign policy, reflecting a status of polarization and extreme worry about the current situation.... During the Israel barbaric aggression against Lebanon, the American stand seems to be even more confused, and no one is concerned with Rice's launching of the bases of a 'new Middle East' over the skulls of the children of Qana and Palestine.... Only two things out of all the American strategic plans and visions for the Middle East are confirmed. The first is the 'creative' chaos; wars, destruction, hundreds of thousands of dead people, division and disputes. The second is that the new conservatives have led the U.S. foreign policy on a failed march and conflicts that have exhausted America's military power, its moral reputation and its world image. The U.S. policy today is not creating a new Middle East, but is destroying projects of development and growth in it, or as Friedman described it: the Middle East on the eve of modernity. In this context, it is not strange to read for columnist Bateer Wardam an obituary of the moderate Arab. After all, this Arab is the last victim of the U.S. policy in this region."

-- "The wounds of the dead"

Chief Editor Ayman Safadi writes on the back-page of independent, centrist Arabic daily Al-Ghad (08/02): "Hezbollah has now become the hero that the Arabs seek in this time of humiliation that Israel imposed with American support. Hassan Nasrallah has become, in the eyes of millions of Arabs and Muslims, the symbol of sacrifice, strength and resisting an eternal enemy that understands only the language of force and that cannot be reined in except by the ability to hurt it. The region is going to be a long time the cost of the Israeli piracy and the American intransigence. The Arab world has now entered a state of desperation, anger, frustration and desire for vengeance that will be translated by seeking every possible way to protect the dignity and avenge the unjust shedding of Arab blood.... The Arabs believe that they have nothing more to lose. Their lands were occupied; their children were killed; their women were displaced; their homelands were stolen; their men were humiliated; and the world has turned against them.... This is the outcome of the Israel aggressiveness and the American policies. The new Middle East that U.S. President George Bush wants is going to be built over the bodies of the Lebanese and the Palestinians; a land of desperation and frustration that is bound to blow up against everything Israeli and American."

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